Questions with Answers - Adobe Acrobat Forms

About the new forms

To increase the accessibility and "user-friendliness" of agency permit application forms, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management is in the process of converting permit application forms to fillable Adobe Acrobat PDF format and making them available on the Internet. These new forms offer a high degree of flexibility; to fill out the forms, you may:

1. Print off a blank copy of the PDF form, fill it in by hand, and mail it in to the appropriate branch of IDEM,
2. print off a blank copy of the PDF form, fill it in with a typewriter, and mail it in to the appropriate branch of IDEM,
3. fill out the PDF form using your mouse and keyboard, print the filled in form on your printer, and mail it to the appropriate branch of IDEM.

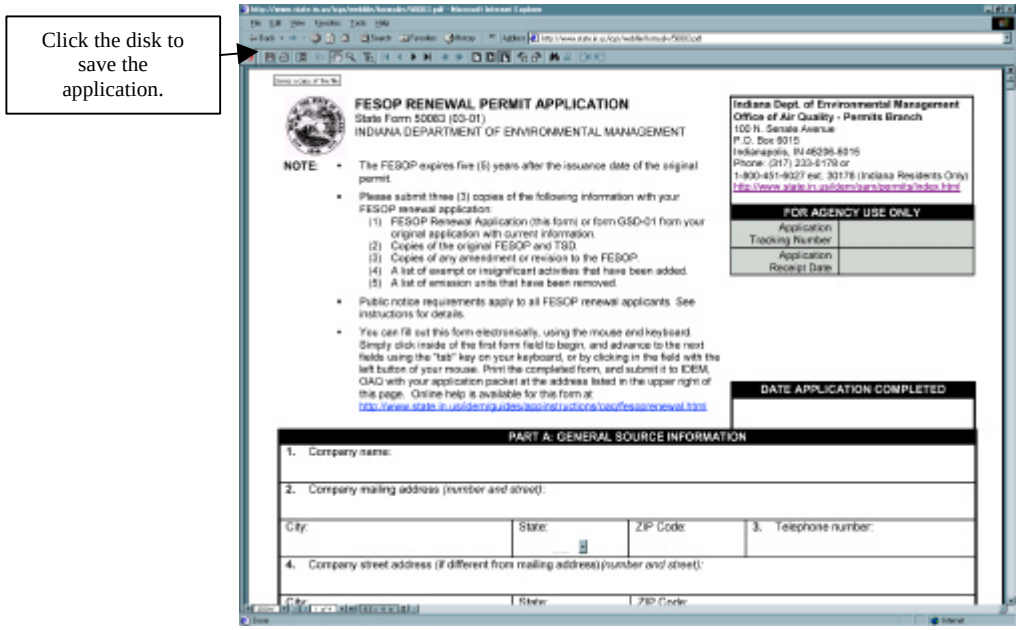
Additionally, plans to accept forms as attachments to e-mail are currently being developed.

What software do I need to view Acrobat PDF forms?

To view, fill-in, and print forms in Adobe Acrobat format, you need to have the free Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer. The latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded for free from the Adobe Acrobat Reader Download Page. To save filled-in PDF forms to your computers hard drive, intact with the information you entered into the form, you'll need the full Adobe Acrobat software package installed on your computer. For more information, see the Adobe Acrobat Products Page at: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html

How do I download the forms?

To download pdf permit application forms, simply click on the link to the form (NOTE: A link to the form is provided at the top of each IDEM permit application instruction sheet). If you have Adobe Acrobat Reader or other Adobe Acrobat software installed on your computer, the form will soon open in your browser. Save the form to your hard-drive by clicking on the small disk icon that appears at the upper-left hand side of the frame surrounding the form. Alternately, you can click on File/Save from the menu-bar at the top of your browser window.



Although you can fill out the form while it is displayed in the "plug-in" that allows it to appear in your web-browser window, we recommend downloading the form to your hard drive and opening it with Acrobat Reader prior to filling out the form electronically. This will avoid the accidental loss of form data if you should accidentally click (or activate a 'shortcut key') the "back" or "forward" buttons at the top of your web-browser window, as your web-browser will close the form and move on to the linked page, losing the data you entered into the form. Form data is

not retained if you browse to other web-links in the same browser window that you are using to display (and fill-in) a PDF form. To avoid this problem, simply download the form to your computer, and open it with Adobe Acrobat Reader by double-clicking on the file.

How do I fill in PDF-fillable forms?
To fill-in the form online, simply retrieve the form through the Adobe Acrobat Reader or double-click on the form's file icon to open the form, place your cursor in the first line of the form (by clicking in the location of the first form field with your mouse), and begin keying in your information. Use the tab key and/or your mouse to move between information boxes. When the form is completed, use the print function to print the completed form, complete with the filled-in form fields.

Can I save filled-in Acrobat PDF Forms?
The free Adobe Acrobat Reader allows you to view, print, save (from the web), and fill in PDF documents, but does not allow you to save altered (i.e. filled-in) pdf files complete with your information entered into the document. To save electronic forms, intact with the information you entered into the form, you'll need the full Adobe Acrobat software package installed on your computer. For more information, see the Adobe Acrobat Products Page at:
http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html

Should I retain printed copies of filled out forms?
If you have the full Adobe Acrobat software package installed on your computer, you can save the filled-in form to your hard drive for future reference. If you only have the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software, you can still save the form as a file, but any data you entered into form fields will not be saved along with the permit application form. For this reason, if you are using Adobe Acrobat Reader, it is essential that you print out at least two copies of the filled out form(s); one copy for IDEM, and one for your records. It is important that you retain at least one printed copy of any permit application form you fill out. You will need to have at least one printed copy of the permit application on hand to use to make copies, whether for legal records, or to comply with the public notice requirements of some permit statutes (such as those outlined in 326 IAC 2-8-13(b)(1) that require that FESOP permit applicants place a copy of the permit application or permit modification application for public review at a library). Even if you have the full Adobe Acrobat software package and have a saved version of the form(s), it may be a good idea to print out copies for your records in case the file is lost in the event of a computer failure; etc.

What is Acrobat PDF?
Acrobat is the name for a family of document interchange products written by Adobe Systems, Inc. The underlying file format is the Portable Document Format (PDF). The idea is that any document in PDF format, when viewed on-screen, represents the exact appearance of the document if you were to print it on your computer's printer. The PDF file can be viewed by anyone with the freely available Adobe Acrobat Reader.

PDF is a "platform-independent" format, meaning that and reading and writing software is available for a variety of computing platforms (Windows, Macintosh, UNIX; etc) PDF Documents can be exchanged freely between users of those platforms.

One of the greatest strengths of Acrobat PDF format is it's ability to preserve document formatting, so when printed, the document appears exactly as it does on-screen. Additionally, Acrobat supports navigational aids such as hyperlinks, bookmarks and thumbnail views, and even has fill-in capability, so users can enter text into form fields; etc.

For More Information:

A somewhat dated, but still relevant Acrobat PDF Tutorial is available at
http://w3.aces.uiuc.edu/AIM/scale/tutorials/Acrobat/index.html

You can also see the Acrobat FAQ from Adobe Systems, Inc. at
http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/pdfs/acr4faq.pdf